

THE AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S FOLKLORE NEWSLETTER

Sept 1983 No 5

Remembering a pioneer

Produced at the Institute of Early Childhood
Development, 4 Madden Grove, Kew, Victoria, 3101.

ISSN 0728-5531

The Dorothy Howard Exhibition (July 6-27) was 'launched' with fitting ceremony on the first evening. About 50 people, including a number who remembered Dorothy Howard from her time in Australia in 1954-55, listened appreciatively to a 'Welcome to Children's Folklore' speech by the Acting Assistant Director of M.C.A.E. - I.E.C.D., Dr Des Connelly, and words of praise and appreciation of Dr Dorothy Howard's work from June Factor, who had visited Dr Howard in New Mexico earlier this year.

The Exhibition contained examples of Dorothy Howard's collection and analysis of children's folklore over almost 60 years. Artefacts ranged from sheep knucklebones and a toodlemuck from Australia to elaborately dressed apple dolls from Lincoln, Nebraska, and a hand-made top from Tonala, Mexico. (A complete catalogue of items exhibited is provided at the end of this Newsletter.)

The interest created by this exhibition is a further example of the growing appreciation of children's folklore in this country. Further exhibitions are planned.

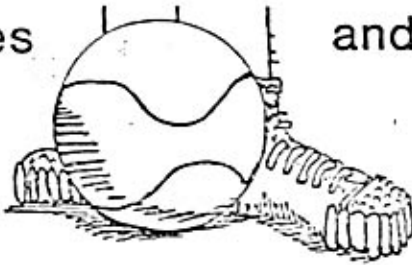
Opening of the Dorothy Howard Children's Folklore Exhibition,
I.E.C.D. 6/7/83.

June Factor
Gwenda Davey



REBOUND :

Replies and



correspondence

This was one of a number of reminiscences sent to the editors of the Newsletter. More are welcomed.

OLD ENGLISH TRADITIONS by Mary Small

Born and brought up in England, I have a few contributions; some you have already, others might be new ...

I know of an 87 year old vicar's widow who refuses to wear anything green. She says it's very unlucky.

We believed it would rain if cows lay down; a cat washed behind its ears; we killed a spider.

If we spilt salt we quickly threw it over the left shoulder.

We used to make up future predictions then spin a knife in the centre of the table to see to whom it pointed.

We crossed our fingers and wished if we saw a white horse in a field. Fingers couldn't be uncrossed until we found a black dog. Sometimes more white horses were seen than black dogs which made it difficult to keep crossing fingers!

It was bad luck to view the new moon through glass (window).

It was good luck if you saw the new moon outside, bowed to it and turned around three times.

We always seemed to be crossing our fingers for luck!

We collected autographs. Usually these were the signatures of the family and close friends, sometimes a drawing, often rhymes.

We always had pancakes on Shrove Tuesday.

We believed in the Tooth Fairy, carefully placing the tooth under the pillow at night.

Some of the nonsensical rhymes I can remember are:

'I know a man called Michael Flinnigan
He grew whiskers on his chinnigan
The wind came out and blew them innigan
Poor old Michael Flinnigan, 'beginnigan.'

'See the maggots on the cheese
Crawling on their hands and knees
It's enough to make you sneeze
Itchy koo! Itchy koo!'

'Nobody loves me, everybody hates me,
Going into the garden to eat worms..'

Then a song which shows origin and currency date!

'How can guinea pig show he's pleased
When he hasn't got a tail to wag?
Every other animal, you will find
Has got a little tail stuck on behind.
If they'd only put a tail on the guinea pig,
And finish off a perfect job,
The price of a guinea pig might go right up,
From a guinea to thirty bob!'

From my autograph book are the following rhymes:

'Can't think, brain's dumb, inspiration won't come.
Rotten ink, bad pen, good luck, amen.'

'Man's inhumanity to Man makes
Countless thousands mourn.'

'You asked me to write in your 'auto'
And put something original in,
But I've nothing original in me,
Since I lost my original sin.'

'Never trouble trouble, till trouble
Troubles you,
For if you trouble trouble when trouble
Troubles you,
You only double trouble and trouble
Others too.'

'All is not gold that glitters.'

'Upon this book you look,
Upon this book you frown,
Think of the person who spoilt your
book

umap apish butum lg

'Out on the ocean, carved on a rock,
Are four little words FOR-GET-ME-NOT.'


'God made the little nigger boys,
He made them in the night,
He made them in a hurry
And forgot to paint them white.'



*HE COMETH NOT
SHE SAID*

Alfred Eggleston
25-11-08.

Extract from Autograph Album belonging to Hilda Gault, Hawthorn.

'Captain DDDD
Took his CCCC
To the W.D.S.T.
And fed them on  o o o o
(Can anyone explain this one? We
need some help! - eds)

'The rain it raineth every day,
Upon the just and unjust fellow,
But mostly on the just,
Because the unjust has the just's
umbrella.'

'Would that God the gift would gie
To see ourselves as others see us.'





A Latin rhyme!

'Eis a Mare heres ego,
Fortibus es in ero.
Nosces Mare themis trux
Vaticinem pes an dux.'

(I say Mary here's a go,
Forty buses in a row.
No says Mary them is trucks
What is in them? Peas and ducks.)

'The rose is red,
The violet blue,
Sugar is sweet
And so are you.'

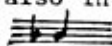


'By hook or by crook,
I'll be last in your book.'

'I  cry,
I  laugh,
I  sign
Your  graph.'

Another thing that we found great fun was
receiving or composing letters when the
words were substituted by drawings.



(For Mary wiv love Ann.)

There was also in autograph books ...
Never 
Sometimes 
Always 

Mary Small,
Glen Waverley

What's in a name?

Extract from Autograph Album belonging to Hilda Gault,
Hawthorn.

NAMING TRADITIONS: CAN YOU HELP?

I am compiling a book about names and naming traditions amongst the different cultures represented in Australia for teachers.

You may be familiar with one or several language groupings or cultures and could help with any of the following:

- history of naming traditions
- history of particular names; meanings
- common first and last names
- abbreviations of names; nicknames
- kinship names
- pet names or terms of endearment
- name days and celebrations
- whether or not women change their names after marriage.

Also, any of the following (which are connected with names):

- rhymes
- jokes
- songs
- stories
- folk lore; superstition
- name games.

If you can help, I will be glad to receive information by mail -

Mrs H. Christie-Johnston,
123 Disraeli Street,
KEW, VIC., 3101.

If you would like to talk to me about the project, I work at Templestowe Tech. (Phone 850 6333). Please talk about this project with your friends - the more information, the better the finished product! There is a cassette planned to accompany the book giving pronunciation for first and last names. I hope the book will be a useful resource and will increase understanding.

Summer fashion 1910-1911 versus
an overcrowded
ham car.



Standing room
only.

J. Mabel Carrick

"Menindee"

Canterbury

March 7th 1911.

AUSTRALIAN FOLK RESOURCES - A SELECT
GUIDE AND PRELIMINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY

Graham Seal (ed), Australian Folk Trust,
1983. ISBN 0-9594971-1-0

This publication aims firstly to locate and delineate the public and private folklore collections throughout Australia, including collections of Aboriginal folk culture and the folklore of non-English speaking groups. Secondly, it provides a preliminary bibliography of Australian folklore, limiting itself to the folklore of English speaking groups and de-tribalised Aborigines. The material listed in the bibliography ranges from collections and discursive works to articles, journals and unpublished material. This publication is the first of its kind in Australia, and thus provides an invaluable resource for students of Australian folklore. For copies and/or further information contact: The Australian Folk Trust, P.O. Box 265, Paddington, Qld., 4064.

The following notes provided by Hazel Hall are a summary of a seminar paper which she delivered at the Department of Music, Monash University, on 24th April, 1983. Readers may also be interested in Hazel Hall's article "Children's Play-Lore: implications for the teaching of poetic language" in The Educational Magazine (Victoria), Vol.40, No.3, 1983. To quote from the Magazine, "Hazel S. Hall is a teacher on leave from the Education Department while completing research towards a doctorate in education at Monash University."

CHILDREN'S JUMP-ROPE CHANTS: SOME CONSIDERATIONS

1. Context, function and use-value

- 1.1 Context: Ritual (secular); folk.
- 1.2 Function: Entertainment of participants.
- 1.3 Use value: To co-ordinate the movements of a given jump rope sequence.

2. Performers

- 2.1 Tends towards groups rather than individuals.
- 2.2 Sex: Girls
- 2.3 Performance mode: Intermediate to speech and song.

3. Paralinguistic variables

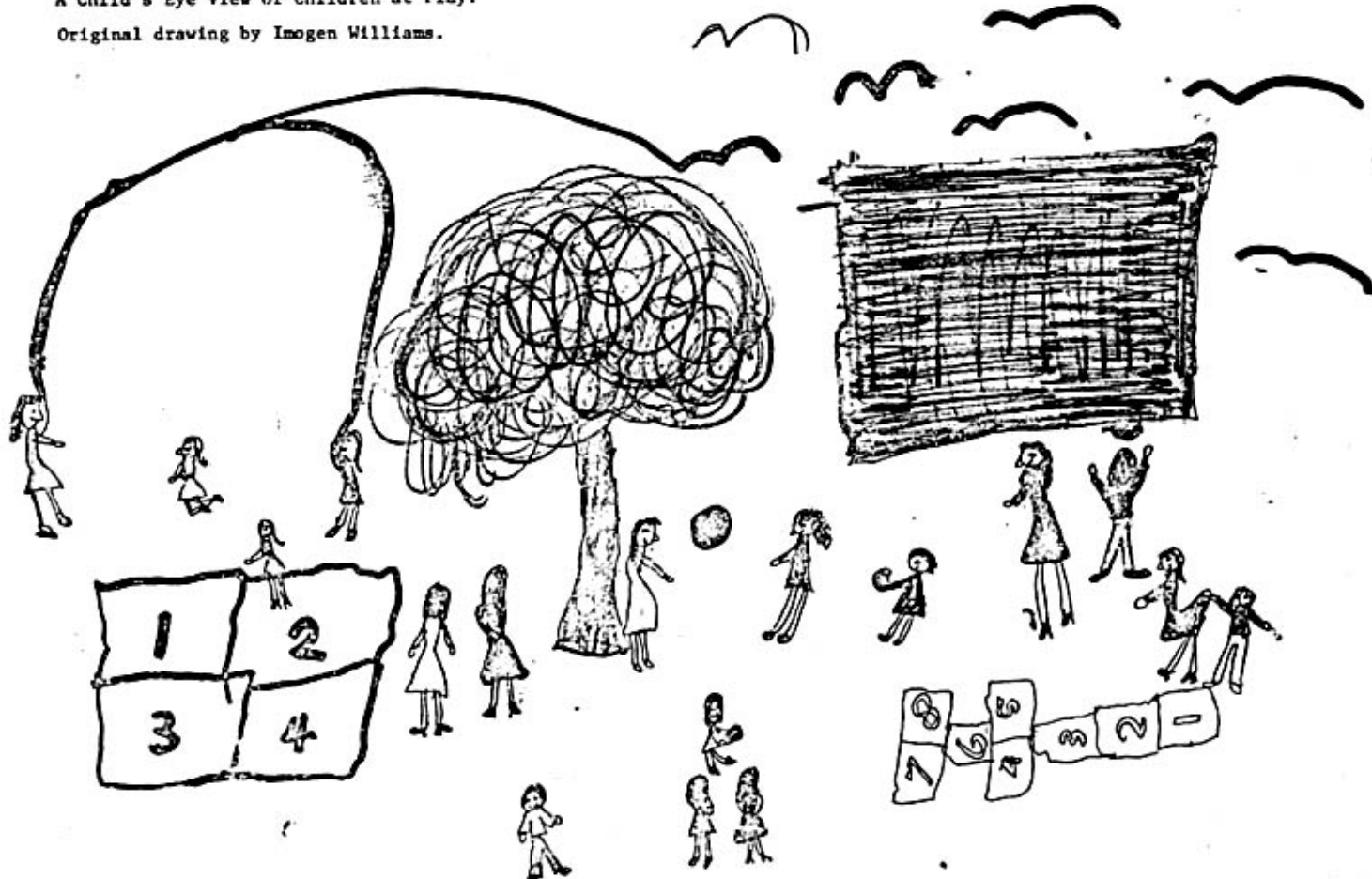
- 3.1 Regular intonation patterns.
- 3.2 Regular phrasing.
- 3.3 Regular scanning patterns, predominantly trochaic.
- 3.4 As the paralinguistic elements develop into musical elements, the semantic redundancy of the text increases.

4. Musical variables

- 4.1 Main tonal base with two or more relatively stable auxiliary tones (normally soh, lah and me in solfa terms).
- 4.2 No tonic as such.
- 4.3 Rope pulse is likely to be between 65-80.

A Child's Eye View of Children at Play.

Original drawing by Imogen Williams.



- 4.4 Rhythm patterns usually directly related to scanning patterns.
 - 4.5 Repetition: Melodic and rhythmic *ostinati* set up.
 - 4.6 Dotted rhythms are common.
 - 4.7 An anacrusis may be present, but syncopation is rare.
 - 4.8 An apparent lack of correlation between rhythm and scanning patterns and length of poetic line may sometimes result in dotted notes and demi-semiquavers, which suggest further variants in Brailoiu's Type 4 model.
5. Poetic variables
- 5.1 Known text, usually end-rhymed.
 - 5.2 Non-rhymed texts often unified by unison rhyming, assonance, word repetition and parallelism.
 - 5.3 Length of texts varies from one line to longer rhymes.
 - 5.4 Regular intonal patterns are more likely to be found in shorter rhymes which are repeated many times.
6. Conclusions

Children's chants tend to result from the natural combination of improvisation and repetition in a folk-ritualistic situation. The "Australian chant formula" (soh-lah-me) seems to have developed from many variables, but in particular, natural intonal and scanning patterns, which emerge through repeated performances. This formula is consistent with the Hungarian (soh-lah-soh-me) and American (soh-me-lah) formulae in the tones used, but not in melodic progression. This data therefore supports the argument that the intonal patterns of Australian children differ from their Hungarian and American counterparts. (Transcriptions made by the writer from the field tapes of Wendy Lowenstein, which were collected in Melbourne and Perth during 1965 and 1969 are consistent with the above conclusion.)

LIFE IN THE CLASSROOM AND PLAYGROUND

by Bronwyn Davies, Lecturer in Education
at the University of New England.

An interesting and thought-provoking study of the views of ten and eleven year old children in an Australian country town.

ROUTLEDGE & KEGAN PAUL
\$21.50
ISBN 0-7100-9210-5

LULLABIES : All
too soothing performance

Laurie Strachan talks to a folksinger who is recognising the lullaby's status as the start of a child's musical education.

Phyl Lobl reckons her biggest worry is that if she performs really well, her audience will fall asleep.

The classic Catch-22 situation has arisen because she has taken it upon herself to re-educate the women of NSW in the singing of songs to their children. She's doing it in a series of workshops for the Women and Arts Festival on lullabies and dandling songs.

Since the first part of the workshop deals with the lullabies, she runs the risk of soothing her audience into somnolence. Well, that's her story anyway.

In fact, Ms Lobl's project is, on one level, a serious attempt to bring music education down to the lowest age levels and, on another, an exercise in social medicine.

"I believe music education starts from the minute a child can hear things," she says. "It's as stupid to send a child to music lessons without having given it some musical vocabulary as it is to send it to learn to read without having spoken to it."

"In our system, kids can get as far as high school without ever having used their voices properly or having any real musical vocabulary. Most of the music they hear comes from the television and the sounds from that are too jumbled and confusing. They get a lot of rhythm from it but they are not able to pick up melodies and they certainly can't use them vocally."

"It's also an important tension reliever for both the child and the mother. The lullaby is the singing of a love song to one person, to an audience of one. It can be quite therapeutic for the mother and I don't see it as spoiling the baby."

When she first had the idea of some sort of project on songs for mothers to sing to their children, she went out and asked the first hundred people she met what they would sing to a baby. She found most of them knew 'Hushabye Baby' and not much else.

Ladies!



To Flattery.

Olive Neale.

"Lahara".

Hawthorn.

September 2nd 1911

School teachers would know one or two Australian-style or Aboriginal lullabies, and perhaps one or two dandling songs - though they didn't know what they were - and a few body-play songs like 'This Little Piggy Went to Market'.

So she set out to gather some more. As a folksinger she had a sizeable collection of song-books and these yielded a fair crop; others she gathered from friends and anybody she could get them from.

As she got deeper into the subject she found it was not as simple as it looked. There were obviously clear distinctions between lullabies, dandling songs and body-play songs, but within the categories there were further differences.

"The lullabies supply melody and the dandling songs rhythm," she says. "The body-play songs are important for just making the child aware of his body as well as for the beginnings of musical education."

The lullabies divide into sections initially according to their country of origin - but there are other categories that transcend nationality.

"A lot of the lullabies reflect social conditions of their times - how the mother was feeling, for instance," says Lobl. "Many Scottish lullabies are from areas of poverty, so the mother may be worrying where the money will come from; others are about dad's drinking."

"And then there are the ones that aren't really lullabies, though everybody thinks they are. They're really concert songs because to sing them you've got to use your full voice, and that would wake the baby up."

(When you've been singing lullabies to babies for a while you find out which of them actually work. Not surprisingly, most of the practical lullabies were written by women but Phyl Lobl regularly uses one written by a man - a little song called 'Coorie Doon', written by a tough Scottish ship-yard worker turned roaming bard called Matt M'Ginn.)

The lullaby has been used in different times and places to carry messages that have little to do with wishing the child sweet dreams. Lobl sings one, to her own tune, called 'The Chinese Mother's Lullaby' whose message is - you'd better go to sleep baby, the Christian man's out there with his musket and his Bible and he'll get you if you don't watch out. She doesn't use that one as a lullaby but rather to demonstrate to her workshopers what isn't a lullaby.

The real lullabies, she says, tend to be much shorter and, in a sense, much more boring - but then that's the whole idea.

"The dandling songs are the ones most people don't understand about," she says. "'When The Boat Comes In' is a classic example, but the ones that I like the best are things like (and here she bursts into song):

Oh Mississippi - oh
Had a little baby oh.
Wrapped it all in calico
Riding on a donkey.

In her workshops she uses a rag doll to show the mothers the sort of actions to perform with the songs.

Sometimes, in order to get as much movement as possible (and that's the point of dandling songs), she writes her own, like this one:

FAR OUT, BRUSSEL SPROUT!

A collection of Australian children's chants and rhymes compiled by June Factor from material held in the Australian Children's Folklore Collection, I.E.C.D.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
\$5.99
ISBN 0-1955-4440-4

Oh would you like to be
Riding up to Sydeney
Or would you rather be
Staying down in Melbourne
You can ride across to Perth
Back again for all you're worth
Or take a little ship and go to Hobart.

All this is accompanied by moving the baby up and down and from side to side while the baby, with any luck, giggles and coos with delight.

Then there are the body-play songs - like 'Round and Round the Garden' and 'This Little Piggy'. They're short but, says Lobl, the kids love them.

She's not averse to a little updating of some time-honored nursery rhymes either. For instance, there's a verse of the well-known 'To Market, to Market', which goes like this:

To market to market to buy a plum cake
Home again, home again nare a one baked
The baker is dead and all of his men
We must go back to the market again.

To update that she changes the last two lines to:

The baker's on strike and all of his men
I'll have to learn to bake them again.

Then there's another version:

To market to market to buy a pavlova
Home again, home again, shopping is over
Shopping is over the money is spent
But baby I do not know where it all went.

Phyl Lobl has been honing her skills on her step-grandchildren but she also has considerable experience in the formal side of music education. She has written a book called 'Not Just Noise' for the seven to ten age group and she's working on another for younger children.

She is also a trained infant teacher, working with partially sighted children and a singer and songwriter with a couple of records out and a song book in the pipeline.

This article by Laurie Strachan appeared in 'The Australian' in October last year - thanks to 'The Australian' for granting permission to reprint it in our newsletter.

Phyl Lobl has since recorded a cassette of these Lullabies, Dandling Songs and Body-Play Songs. This cassette can be obtained from:

P.O. Box 218

Hurstville

Sydney 2220

Cost: \$8 + postage for the cassette and words to all the songs.

KEL WATKINS - STORYTELLER

We recently received a letter of introduction from Kel Watkins - a folklorist who not only spins yarns, and tells stories of the outback, but does so with the aid of two metres of string. He uses the traditional art of string games to illustrate his stories, weaving figures on his fingers whilst he speaks. He is currently filming a video-cassette which he intends to market to schools as a teacher of string figures.

Further information can be obtained from Kel Watkins, G.P.O. Box 553, South Australia.

More reminiscences

Ethel Beed

GAMES OF MY YOUTH (Sydney 1911-1918)

I was working in my kitchen the other day and singing to myself:

"Girls and Boys, come out to play
The moon is shining as bright as day,
Bring your bat and bring your ball,
Come with a goodwill or don't come at all."

I suddenly thought - children don't seem to play games nowadays like they did in my young days. They certainly have more organized sport such as swimming (where they get transported to the swimming pool by bus), joining tennis or netball clubs, hockey clubs, etc. but these sports seem to me to show very little ingenuity. They do as their teacher or coach advises them, and the emphasis is always on their winning.

What about the games of my youth? I was brought up in Newtown, which was a very industrial suburb, and we had to make our own fun. The street was the only place in

which to play, but as there were practically no cars, and one could hear the horses and carts approaching quite easily, there was very little danger.

The best place, however, was at school. Recess (or playtime as it was called then) and lunch time left us the opportunity to organize our own games. I went to a state school where there were three school buildings - boys, girls, and infants. The infants' building was between the boys and girls, so we only had girls in our games. Most of our games combined singing.

We all had our favourite games, but some of them were favourites of all.

A girl (or more if the game required more than one) had to be chosen to go 'IT' or 'HE', by chanting little ditties like:

"Eeny meeny miney mo,
Catch a nigger by the toe,
If he hollers let him go,
Eeny meeny miney mo,
Out goes she," or

"Mary Mack, dressed in black,
Silver buttons down her back,
She likes coffee, I like tea,
She likes sitting on a black man's
knee."

One of our favourite games was "Sheep, sheep, come home". There had to be a wolf, a shepherd, and as many sheep as we could muster. The wolf hides, the shepherd stands at the sheep-fold, about 15 feet from the sheep, and chants:

"Sheep, sheep, come home."

The sheep reply -

"We're afraid."

Shepherd - "What of"?

The sheep - "The wolf."

Shepherd - "The wolf won't be home till ten o'clock tonight, so sheep, sheep, come home."

The sheep then run to the sheep-fold, and the wolf springs out and endeavours to catch one or more sheep. Whatever sheep are caught have to go to the wolf's den and stay there until the sheep are caught. Then the game begins again with a different wolf and shepherd. Quite often the bell rang and we had to go back into the classroom before everyone had had a turn at being wolf or shepherd.

Another was "Green Gravel". We skipped round in a ring singing:

"Green gravel, green gravel, the grass
is so green,

The fairest young lady that ever was
seen.

We washed her in milk and dressed her
in silk,

And wrote her name down with a gold pen
and ink.

Dear Jennie (or Mary or Lily) dear
Jennie

Your true love is dead,

We've sent you a letter to hang down
your head."

When the song was ended, the girl whose name had been chosen had to turn around, facing out of the circle. The song continued, another girl having been chosen who did likewise, until all the girls were facing out, if there was sufficient time.

Another popular game was "Oranges and Lemons". There had to be two leaders who would decide on a "prize" they would offer to endeavour to get all the girls on their side. The "prizes" had to be more or less of equal value, e.g., a Golden Piano and a Golden Organ, were two popular prizes, although sometimes it would be only an orange or an apple.



The Greatest Game in the World ~ His Move

Extract from Autograph Album belonging to Hilda Gault,
Hawthorn,

H. A. Fleming
Halvern
17.5.10

The leaders would join hands and form an arch under which the other children marched while they all sang:

"Oranges and lemons, the bells of St. Clements,
You owe me three farthings, when will you pay me?
Next Monday morning, chippa, choppa,
chippa, choppa,
Last man's head, head, head, head off!"

They would then bring their arms down and trap one, who would then be taken out of earshot and asked which prize she would like. When chosen, she had to join the line of the leader whose prize she had chosen. When all had had a choice there was a tug of war between both sides.

"Puss in the Corner" was another game we played. A "puss" had to stand in each of four corners and a "catcher" in the centre. The "catcher" would call "puss, puss", and the "puss" in each corner would have to change places with her diagonal counterpart, whilst the "catcher" tried to catch one. The "puss" caught would then become the "catcher" and so on it went.

"Drop the Hankie" was played by forming a ring of girls, one being 'IT' or 'HE'. She had to go round the back of the ring and drop a hankie on the shoulder of one girl who, if she discovered the hankie would chase the "dropper" round the circle. The one who got back to the space last had then to be the "dropper".

"Find the Ring Sir (or Miss)". This game was a favourite at birthday parties. Several children would form a ring and a long piece of string was tied into a ring on which was placed a real ring. Each held this in front with both hands. There was a "Duffer" in the centre who had to try to catch the one in whose hand was the ring as it was passed around. They all sang:

"Find the ring sir (or miss), find the ring, sir,
Its somewhere on the string, sir,
Find the ring sir, find the ring sir,
Its somewhere on the ring.
There stands the "Duffer" in the middle of the ring,

There stands the "Duffer" in the middle of the ring,
There stands the "Duffer" in the middle of the ring,
As the ring goes round and round,
Find the ring sir, (repeat until the "Duffer" picks the one who has the ring. That person then becomes the "Duffer" in the middle.).

"Rounders" was a popular game, and sometimes the teacher would take us to a park about half a mile away (walking of course) to play this game as space was needed. It was a variation on cricket, but played with a tennis ball and a bat of any kind. It was done in a circle, and there were about four bases besides "home". The game was for the batter to hit the ball and then to run to as many bases as possible and back to home.

Skipping was popular in winter, though we often got into trouble at home for wearing out our shoes. A favourite was "French and English". You needed two fairly long ropes, also two girls to turn. None of us wanted to turn if we could help it, but as in other games, this had to be decided by counting with the before-mentioned ditties. The girls who owned the ropes never took first turn at turning. Each rope had to be turned to the centre, that is right hand to left and left hand to right. We would all be in a line and the first girl would run in and skip over the two ropes. This was very hard, and I was not very good at it. When you stopped the rope with your foot you had to take an end and turn. There was always some girl who learnt dancing and she could always do French and English much better than most of the others. She hardly

GROWING UP

by Alan Roberts

The Social History of Glebe and Annadale No.7. Produced by Bill Collins and Faye Smith at Glebe Public School. ISBN 0-949690-07-4

A light-hearted collection of reminiscences of childhood in two inner suburbs of Sydney.

ever had to turn, but I seemed to be turning all the time. "French and German" was similar to "French and English", but the ropes had both to be turned outward, and this was even harder to do.

"Running In" was done with one long rope and two turning. We all had a turn to run in and skip once, then next time round twice and so on. As in all skipping games, when you were out by stopping the rope you had to turn.

"Peppers" was a good game. You ran in and then skipped to "Salt, mustard, pepper". The rope was turned faster and faster.

"All In Together" gave a chance to the 'not so good'. Quite a few skipped together, singing:

"All in together, this cold weather,
I saw Peter, hanging out the window,
Bush, bang, fire ---"

whereupon we all ran out, and whoever stopped the rope had to take an end as in the other games. Of course, when a lot were running out together, there was often an altercation as to who had stopped the rope.

Of course you could skip alone with a shorter individual rope, but that wasn't much fun.

"Nuts in May" was a skipping game played without a rope. There had to be two sides. One side (usually about six girls) had to skip over to the opposite side singing:

"Here we go gathering nuts in May, nuts
in May, nuts in May,
Here we go gathering nuts in May, on a
cold and frosty morning."

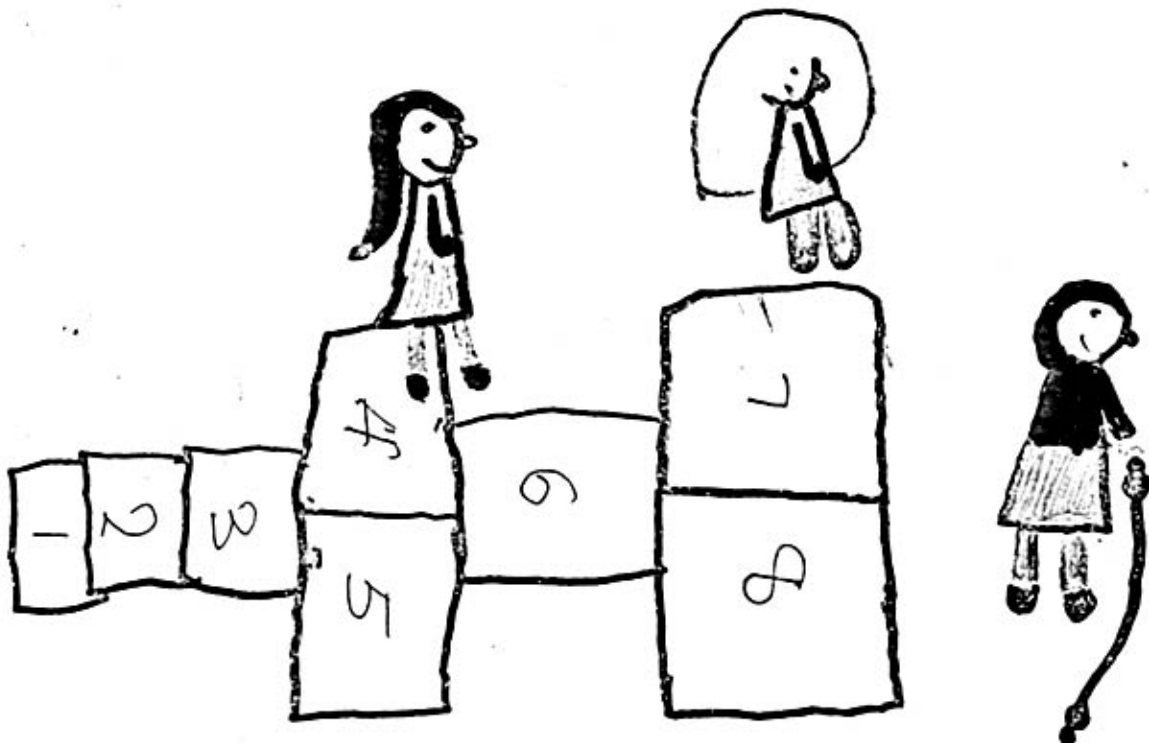
The side whom they approached would then reply, singing:

"Who will you have for your nuts in
May, nuts in May, nuts in May?
Who will you have for your nuts in May,
on a cold and frosty morning?"

First side would respond with:

"We'll have Mary (or Jean etc.) for our
nuts in May, nuts in May, nuts in May,
We'll have Mary for our nuts in May, on
a cold and frosty morning."

Mary would then step out in front, and the side from which Mary had been chosen would sing:



A Child's Eye View of Children at Play. Original Drawing by Sophie Williams.

"Who will you have to pull her away, pull her away, pull her away?
Who will you have to pull her away, on a cold and frosty morning?"

The first side would respond (skipping back and forth all the time):

"We'll have Lizzie to pull her away, on a cold and frosty morning."

The next step was that Lizzie had to step out and Mary and Lizzie had to try to pull the other to their side. The one who was pulled over had to join the opposing side, and so on it went.

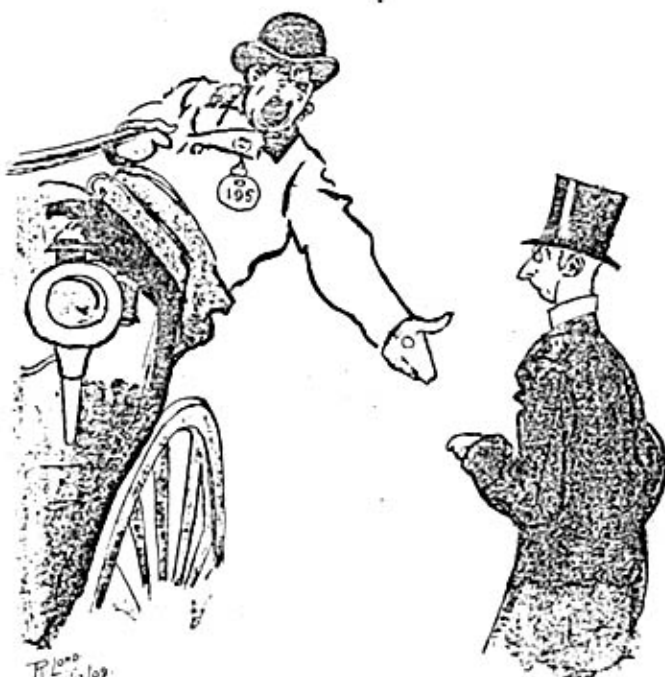
"Hopscotch" was one game I nearly forgot. The "hopscotch" was chalked on the footpath. Two squares, then one, two more, one, then home. The squares were numbered. Each player had a "tor" and hopped and kicked her tor into the next base without touching a line. If you went on a line or used two legs you were "out" or penalised. I don't remember all the rules, but I do remember that this game was considered "a shoe wearer outer".

We girls had wooden hoops which we whipped along with a stick. The boys had iron ones which were guided by an iron rod with a hook at the end which went over the hoop. These iron ones made an awful noise, especially if several boys were having a "hoop race".

Then there were spinning tops. These were wooden and shaped like a cone. The top was broad and it came to a point at the bottom where there was a steel point. We coloured the top with different colours and they looked pretty when they were spinning around. I neglected to say that you had a cord which was wound around the top. It had a button on the end which went between two fingers. You threw it to make it spin. Some children were very good at spinning (not I) and kept their top going for a long time by whipping it with their cord.

"Marbles" was another good game, or rather there were several games one could play with them. It was mostly boys who played these games (and mostly in gutters)

but sometimes girls did, too. There was Big Ring, Small Ring, and Three Holes, but the one I liked the best was played with a piece of cardboard with six holes cut along the bottom, increasing in size, and numbering from 1 to 6. The smallest opening, which barely let the marble through was numbered 6, and the largest, which was easy, 1. This cardboard had a backing to make it stand up and it was played on a table. You rolled your marble, or fired it, towards the cardboard and through the holes. The opposing player had to pay a forfeit, e.g. if you went through 6, your opponent had to give you six marbles. If, however, you missed, you forfeited your marble to your opponent.



Extract from Autograph Album belonging to Hilda Gault, Hawthorn.

'CABBY'

"Faggies" was flicking cigarette cards against a wall. If yours flicked across one previously played by your opponent, you picked up his as well as your own. Also, the one nearest home, i.e., the one who could flick his card the farthest, won and collected the others.

"Tip Cat" was played with a piece of round wood about 4" long and sharpened at each end, also a stick as a striker. The game was to hit one end of the "cat" with the striker and when up in the air hit it

again to see how far you could get it in two hits. If you failed to hit the "cat" in two strikes you were out.

Two girls would play "Wash the Dishes". They would hold hands and sing:

"Wash the dishes, dry the dishes, turn the dishes over,
Make the bed, shake the bed, turn the mattress over."

When they came to the line "turn the dishes over" they would turn back to back, raising arms and twisting without letting go of their hands. On the line "turn the mattress over" they would turn to face each other again, still without letting go!

Games were played a lot at church socials. The church I attended didn't allow dancing at that time, but games were enjoyed just as much, I think.

"Musical Chairs" was a very popular game. A piano, pianist, and several chairs were required. There had to be one less chair than players, the chairs being placed in the centre of the hall, back to back. The music played and we marched around these chairs, and when the pianist stopped playing, we had to rush for a chair and sit on it. Of course one player didn't get a chair and he was out. One chair was also removed and the game resumed. It was very exciting when only one chair and two players were left, and there was a stampede by both players for the one chair. The winner usually received a small prize.

"Musical Stick" was similar, but we sat down for this and as many as liked could play. The music started and a stick was passed from hand to hand (the left hand I think). Whoever was caught with the stick when the pianist stopped the music was out, and the last one in was the winner.

Then there was the "Hymn Book Race", running the length of the hall with a hymn book on the head. Out if it fell off which it usually did.

"Two's and Three's" was also popular. A circle had to be formed of two people,

one behind the other. Then there was one person in the centre of the circle. The game was that the one in centre would stand in front of a "two", making it "three", and the one in back of the three had then to run to another group of two making it three when the back one of the three would do likewise. There may have been another player to catch the third before he was able to get to a two group, but I can't remember.

Ethel Beed,
Bulleen, Victoria.

HELP!

We would like to have a segment in subsequent issues of the ACFN called 'Notes from Street and Playground'. Please send us your observations of children at play - brief or elaborated!

=====

I have received a grant from the Australian Folk Trust to publish an annotated bibliography of Australian children's folklore. If any readers know of material in this field (published or in manuscript), I would be grateful if they would contact me c/- The Australian Children's Folklore Newsletter.

June Factor.

REVIEW OF EENIE-MEENIE-DES-O-LEERIE :

THE FOLKLORE OF CHILDREN OF ALPS ROAD

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - Barbara Tobin.

In this paper, Barbara Tobin presents a descriptive account of her intensive study of the folklore of children from one elementary school in Georgia, U.S.A. Despite her eight months of in-depth observation and interviewing, she admits to only having scratched the surface of the childlore in this area, but presents her 'scratchings' in an attempt to 'illustrate their richness and their functional importance to their bearers' (p.9), and to demonstrate once again that folklore plays a crucial role in children's socializing, psychological and learning processes.

Tobin divides the Alps Road School folklore into four major categories for ease of description and analysis:

1. Folk games and Traditional Pastimes: including outdoor running, chasing, hiding and kicking; games like Tag and Red Rover; and predominantly indoor games played in the lunchroom and classroom, like cooties and jacks.
2. Game Rhymes: including
 - (a) rhythmic performance rhymes - jump rope, cheers, handclap and ring games;
 - (b) protest rhymes - jeers, taunts, shockers, parodies, racial slurs;
 - (c) rhymes of chance - counting out rhymes;
 - (d) rhymes just for fun.
3. Wit: including tricks (verbal and body manipulation), jokes and riddles.
4. The Unknown: including divination, ghost tales and superstition.

Tobin takes each of these areas separately, looking firstly at their historical role in the school's playground through interviews with ex-students and long serving teachers, and then gives a thorough description of their current status in the playground.

Her choice of Alps Road Elementary School was certainly an interesting one, as the school has some unusual features. Firstly, for the sake of discipline and academic progress(!), the school program allows very little time for unstructured, unsupervised play. Recess is short and often given over to physical education or supervised kickball games, and the lunchroom is strictly supervised.

'The reduction of time for play has undoubtedly contributed to the decline in the more traditional folk games that take time, equipment and organization. The prevalence in the school today of verbal

Cat's cradle figures.

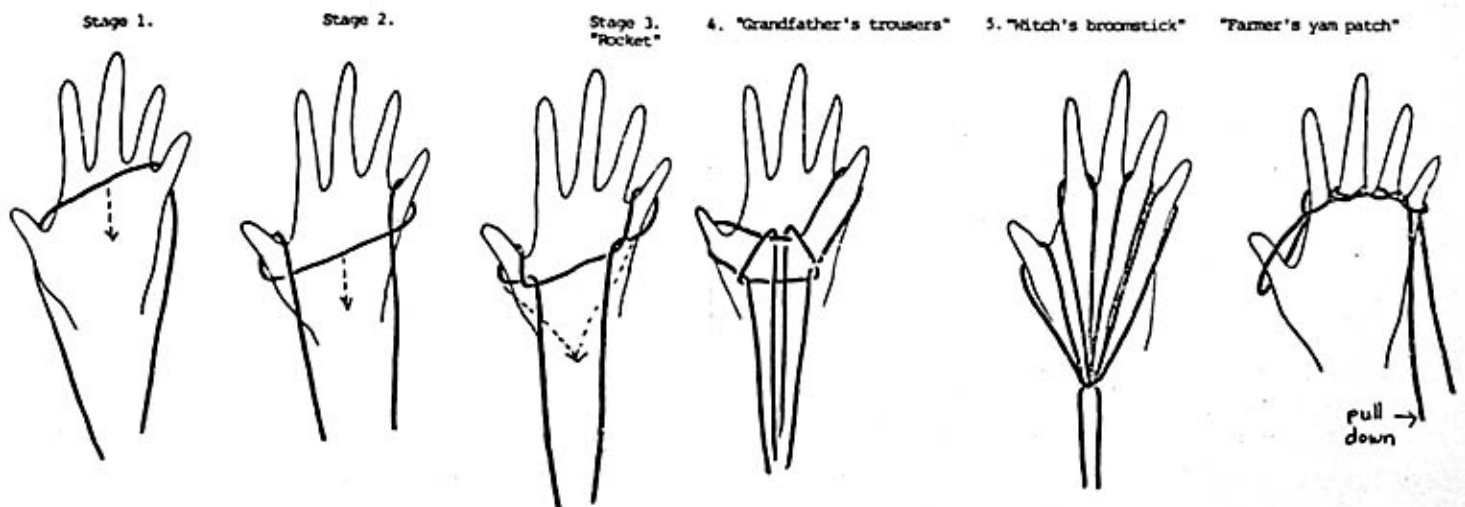


Illustration from 'Eenie-Meenie-Des-O-Leenie' (p.25)

tricks, finger plays, teasing rhymes and handclaps, reflects the way the children have adapted to the constraints of the formal program in order that they can continue to express their irrepressible instinct to play.' (p.10)

Whilst it is encouraging to see that children's folklore per se is surviving the repressions of the school system, it seems to me that there needs to be a more thorough investigation into the effects of this change in emphasis in folklore. Games such as indoor 'table' football, basketball and soccer, played during the supervised lunch break, do not of course require the physical fitness, skill, co-ordination or co-operation that the more traditional games of hopscotch, jump-rope and ball-bouncing required, and we need to know what effect this is having on children's overall learning and acquisition of life skills.

The second interesting feature of Alps Road Elementary School is that it was opened in 1956, having an all-white, predominantly upper-middle class population. Since integration in 1969, the population is now almost equal in terms of black and white students, and is predominantly lower-middle class.

'Black girls have brought a whole new dimension to rhythmic performance games through their more expressive performance oriented style of play ... young black girls learn at an early age a communal, co-operative play that is most clearly evident in ring games.'

The following is an example of a black ring game adopted by the white girls, with black dialect intact (p.36).

"Hula, hula, who think they bad?
Hula, hula, who think they bad?"
"Well, I think I'm bad 'cos
Kristin's my name
Blue is my color, don't you worry
'bout my lover."
"Uhh, she think she bad."
"Bad, baby, I know I'm bad."
"Uhh, she think she fine."
"Fine, fine, 'nough to blow your
mind."
"Hula, hula, who think they bad?"
(and so on for each player)

Tobin's observations suggest that the white children at the school appear to have adopted these rhythmic word plays and ring games, learnt from the black girls (which also tends to lead on to mock cheer leading - a current fad at the school). Similarly, the black children have learnt the games, tricks and parodies that are more typical of white children's folklore. She poses the hypothesis that, in fact, the mixing of cultures has produced dramatic changes in the nature of childlore, towards a more rhythmically, verbally expressive and performance-oriented dimension. However, further work, she admits, needs to be done with students prior to and just after integration to rigorously test this.

Paper predictor.

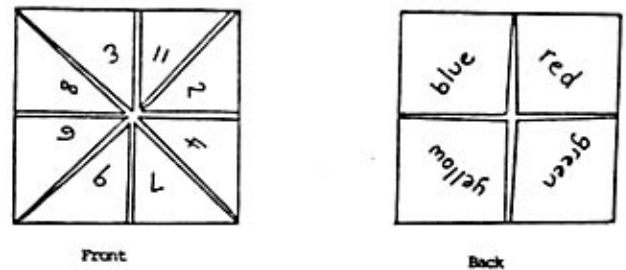


Illustration from 'Eenie-Meenie-Des-O-Leenie' (p. 60)

The paper brings up other crucial issues, such as the conservatism - inventiveness paradox in children's folklore, the racial taunts and slurs in children's humour, and the 'shockers' or obscene rhymes as necessary reinforcement for existing social taboos. Undoubtedly there is an enormous amount of work needing to be done to investigate all those issues more systematically. However, Barbara Tobin's work provides a valuable basis - particularly for her emphasis on the intensive study of one school's population. Studies such as this can provide important learning and feedback for teachers, perhaps encouraging them to give more credit to children's own abilities to play and learn without constant supervision and instruction.

Heather Russell
IECD

Copies of *Eenie-Meenie* can be obtained from Barbara Tobin, c/- School of Education, Western Australian Institute of Technology, Bentley, Perth, W.A.

All About Archiving

June Factor visited the University of Nebraska at Omaha earlier this year, as part of a study tour concerned with children's folklore. Richard Thill's innovative work with computers is well known to folklorists in America. Australians may be interested to learn more about these 'high tech' developments, by joining 'The Archiving Section of The American Folklore Society'.

THE ARCHIVING SECTION OF THE AMERICAN FOLKLORE SOCIETY

Executive Chair: Richard S. Thill, University of Nebraska at Omaha.
Recording Secretary: Phyllis M. Jaff, University of Nebraska at Omaha.

The Archiving Section of the American Folklore Society was founded in 1977 for the express purpose of exchanging information on archival methodology, with particular emphasis upon technological archiving systems, but drawing fully upon the expertise of specialists familiar with manual systems. The Section is working toward the formulation of a nationally standardized archiving model which incorporates the best features of manual and technological systems.

AFS ARCHIVING SECTION NEWSLETTER

Published at the University of Nebraska at Omaha for the Archiving Section of the American Folklore Society.

Editor: Mark Glazer, Pan American University, Edinburg, Texas 78539.

The Australian Children's Folklore Collection at I.E.C.D. holds further information on archiving. Please write to us if you are interested.

THE I.E.C.D. AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN'S FOLK-FOLKLORE COLLECTION

We would like to thank the following people who have generously contributed to our folklore displays in 1982-83: Joan Smith, Kathleen Gawler, Sylvia Rogers, Anne Kotzman, Cheryl Simpson, Ethel Beed, Ronis Chapman, Tony Arthur, Henry Parker.

We are planning a number of new displays of children's play artefacts, and would welcome suggestions and contributions from readers of this Newsletter. Our 'coming attraction' is a display of hand-made and home-made play things. Do you have any to lend us?



Acknowledgements: Sharon Charlton - Typing

CATALOGUE - DOROTHY HOWARD EXHIBITION

M.C.A.E. - INSTITUTE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT - JULY 6th - 27th, 1983.

Dorothy Howard was born on a farm in East Texas in 1902. Her official working life - as teacher, school principal, college and university lecturer, scholar and folklorist - ended on her retirement from the University of Nebraska in 1969; her life-long interest in the welfare and education of children, and above all in their play culture, has continued unabated to this day. She has recorded, analysed and discussed the traditional games and rhymes of the children of three nations: the U.S.A., Mexico, and Australia.

Dr. Howard came to Australia in 1954 as a post-doctoral Fulbright scholar. Attached to the Education Faculty of the University of Melbourne, for ten months she travelled to distant parts of the continent in order to collect and map the traditional play customs of Anglo-Australian children. Hers was the first comprehensive, structured study of Australian children's play lore. She corresponded with all those willing to offer her information - her informants included school children and elderly pensioners - and she wrote a series of monographs based on her research in this country.

This is the first time a representative sample of the material Dorothy Howard collected in Australia, as well as in the U.S.A. and Mexico, has been exhibited. It includes home-made and child-made play artefacts, photographs, letters, and all the Australian monographs.

U.S.A.

1. Jacks bought in Maryland c.1950.
2. Jackstones (played with pebbles) by Dorothy (Mills) Howard in 1905-1910 in East Texas.
3. Marbles in tobacco bag c.1920s and 1930s, Maryland, U.S.A.
4. Top - manufactured in Pennsylvania, bought in Maryland, U.S.A., c.1950.
5. Pea shooter made by a college student in Maryland, U.S.A. c.1960, copy of one he made and used as a boy in Maryland Mountains in the 1930s and 1940s.
6. Baby's rattle carved from one piece of Linden wood c.1910, Maryland, U.S.A.
7. Baby's rattle carved from Linden wood, Maryland, U.S.A., c.1900.
8. Puzzle made about 1890 in Maryland mountains, U.S.A. (for adults).
9. Liberian bush-child's doll, made by her father. The little girl carried the doll in a rag sling on her back (as her mother had carried her as a baby. A Peace Corp participant (U.S.A.) bought the doll in the 1950s, paid the child and paid the father to make her another doll.
10. A & B. Apple dolls made by an 84 year old woman in Lincoln, Nebraska in the 1960s (the kind of dolls her parents made for her when she was a child in pioneer Nebraska in the 1880s).
11. Slingshot, Maryland, U.S.A., c.1920.
12. Limberjack, West Virginia, U.S.A.

MEXICO

13. Pugilists ("Pugil") made by hand, bought in a public market in Guadalajara, Mexico, in 1963.
14. Mexican playing cards.
15. Cigarette cards (children trade them). A gift to Dr. D. Howard (1963) from Pedro Munoz, aged 12, Tonalá, Mexico.
16. Top made by hand in Tonalá, Mexico, c.1960. 'Trompo'.
17. Top made by hand in Tonalá, Mexico, c.1960. 'Trompo'.
18. Top, 'Trompo', manufactured. Bought in a public market in Guadalajara, Mexico in 1963.
19. Toy dishes, made by Senor Thomas Munoz and Senora Carmon Martiniano Munoz and Senor Martiniano (her father) and by Pedro Munoz, aged 12. The toys are also used by adults in social rituals among merchants on public market days ('mercados'), Tonalá. In Tonalá, an ancient pueblo, fifteen miles from Guadalajara, each home is a pottery factory where each family for many generations (hundreds of years) has made the same type of pottery. Pedro, the oldest son, was an apprentice who, one day, would head the family pottery factory, c.1963.
20. Mexican flag.
21. A & B. Mexican hand-made dolls bought in Guadalajara, Mexico in 1962 - dressed by a woman in Maryland, U.S.A. Mexican toys from Guadalajara and Tonalá in the state of Jalisco, collected and bought in 1962 and 1963.
22. Sling made by 70 year old Senor Martiniano in Tonalá, Mexico, who said in his youth he made and used similar sling to kill large wild animals for food. A child's weapon - 'hondo' (Spanish).
23. A & B. Incense of the West - made from native pinon and juniper. A. 'Horno' - oven.
B. The Box made in New Mexico. U.S.A.

AUSTRALIA

24. Knucklebones (sheep's knucklebones), a gift from Miss Kelly, 1954 in Melbourne. She dug them up in her yard (buried there by her dog.)
25. Knucklebones, a gift from a twelve-year-old boy in Perth, 1955.
26. Knucklebones (plastic manufactured) bought in Melbourne in 1954.
27. Miniatures of Queen Elizabeth II and Winston Churchill, bought in Perth, 1955.
28. Miniatures of the Royal Coach, bought in Perth in 1955.
29. Toodlenbuck, gambling toy made by Miss Kelly (school mistress) in Melbourne. A copy of the kind she made as a child and gambled with.
30. 'Stormy Weather'. Painted by Jim Spratt, Australian Aboriginal boy, 12 years old. (c.1950)
31. Penguin, handknit, bought in a shop in Melbourne in 1954.
32. Quondongs, Western Australia, strung on a wire. They were used in a game of skill.

PHOTOGRAPHS

33. 'Marbles' Australia, 1954.
34. 'Crosseball' Melbourne, 1954.
35. 'Bob Down Tiggy' Government school playground, Melbourne, Victoria, 1954.
36. 'Statues' Government school, Melbourne, November, 1954.
37. 'Wash the dishes, dry the dishes, turn the dishes over.' Government school playground, Melbourne, 1954.
38. 'Skippy' Government school playground, Melbourne, November, 1954.
39. 'Jacks' Government school playground, Melbourne, 1954.
40. 'Whizzer' Government school playground, Melbourne, 1954.
41. 'Tip the Finger' Government school playground, Melbourne, 1954.
42. 'Oranges and Lemons' Government school playground, Melbourne, 1954.
43. Australian children at play on a State school playground, Melbourne, 1954.
44. 'Children's Games' by Pieter Bruegel, Flemish, 1525-1569.
45. String game of 'Parachute', Melbourne, 1954.
46. String game of 'Baby's Cradle', Australia, 1954.
47. String game of 'French Lace' or 'Bridge', Australia, 1954.
48. String game of 'See-Saw', Australia, 1954.
49. String game of 'Cup and Saucer', Melbourne, 1954.
50. String game of 'Baby's Cradle' (variation), Australia, 1954.
51. Playing Rounds (Hopscotch), Australia, 1954.
52. Dorothy Howard noting the rules of marbles, Australia, 1954.
53. Dorothy Howard, 1954, Brisbane, Australia at the Koala Sanctuary.
54. Dorothy Howard, 1977, Roswell, New Mexico, U.S.A., wearing a dress copied from her Grandma Gray's 'Sunday' dress.
55. 'Cock-fighting' or 'Hoppy Bumpo'. Boys on a Melbourne State school playground. "The game is usually forbidden, but I saw it going on, nevertheless, all over Australia."
56. 'Queenie' Government school playground, Melbourne, 1954.

AUSTRALIAN MONOGRAPHS - by Dorothy Howard

57. 'Folklore of Australian Children' (The Journal of Education, Victorian Institute of Educational Research, Melbourne, March, 1955.)
58. "Australian 'Hoppy' (Hopscotch)" (Western Folklore, July, 1958.)
59. 'The Game of Knucklebones in Australia' (Western Folklore, January, 1958.)
60. 'Autograph Album Customs in Australia' (Southern Folklore Quarterly, June, 1959.)
61. 'Ball-Bouncing Customs and Rhymes in Australia' (Midwest Folklore, Summer, 1959.)
62. 'The Toodlenbuck - Australian Children's Gambling Device and Game' (Journal of American Folklore, January-March, 1960.)
63. 'Counting-out Customs of Australian Children' (New York Folklore, Summer, 1960.)
64. 'Marble Games of Australian Children' (Folklore, London, September, 1960.)

55. 'String Games of Australian Children' (Folklore, London, June, 1961.)
56. 'Traditional Games and Play of Australian Children' University of Melbourne.

57. Papers and correspondence.

58. Folklore of Australian Children: A Dictionary of Traditional Games, Rhymes and Terminology -

Part one : Games
Part two : Rhymes
Part three : Terms

(Tear off and send in completed form)

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Comments, suggestions for subsequent issues, etc.